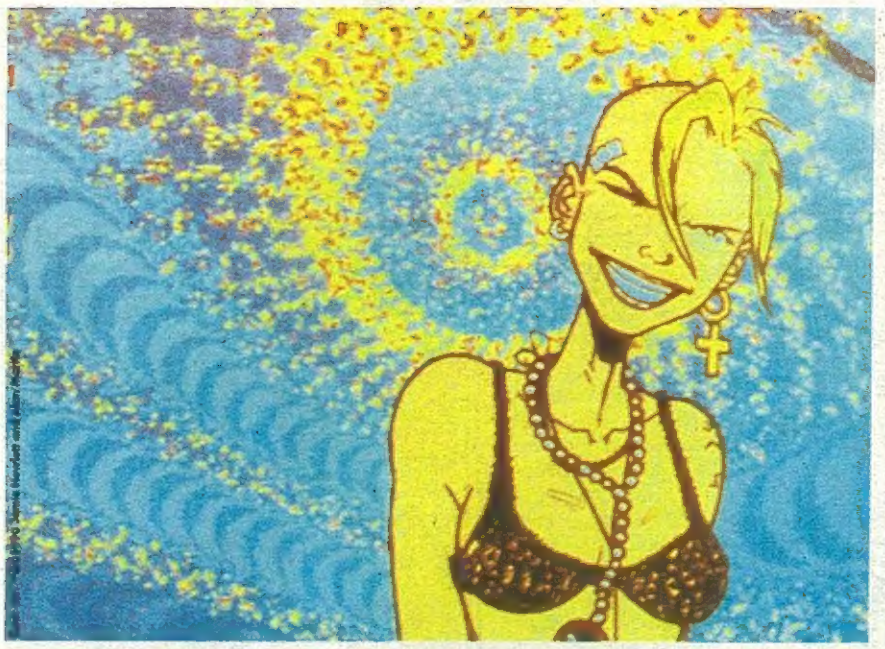
CAPTAIN HARLOCK REVIEWS

BATMAN VS. PREDATOR?!? IT'S TRUE! SEE PAGE 3

COMIC SHOP NEWS

Captain Harlock ™&©1991 Harmony Gold



Tanks For the Memories

Many American fans have never even seen an issue of ***Deadline,*** the hip, trendy British comics magazine. Those fans who have had a chance to flip through the pages of this magazine, however, almost always single out one strip for special mention: ***Tank Girl.***

Tank Girl is a young woman who travels across the Australian outback, depending on her heavily armed battletank to offer a solution to any problems she might face. Unfortunately, more often than not, Tank Girl is perceived as the problem; as a result, her tank often gets much more of a defensive workout than an offensive one. What a way to treat a girl who's just trying to find a little joy in her life...

Some of ***Tank Girl***'s biggest fans, as it turned out, were the folks at Dark Horse Comics. "I first saw ***Tank Girl*** about a year ago," Dark Horse publisher Mike Richardson said, "and I loved it from the moment I read the first story." So what does Dark Horse do when their publisher really loves a series? Simple: they secure the rights to publish it in America. It happened last year with ***The Adventures of Luther Arkwright;*** this year, it happens with the four-issue limited series ***Tank Girl.*** "Hang onto your beer, mates--this babe's armed, dangerous, and thirsty," Bob Schreck of Dark Horse said.

Tank Girl is the creation of Jamie Hewlett and Alan Martin; their work for Deadline magazine will be reprinted in this four issue mature-reader series. "We at Dark Horse are really excited to be publishing this book," Richardson said. "***Tank Girl*** will appeal to any reader who wants to have a good time and isn't afraid to get it from a comic book. Anyone in search of the odd, the rude, the crude, the unusually explosive, strange characters, stranger stories, smart-ass, sharp-edged humor: it's here. This is a book with an attitude for people without one."

Tank Girl, a four-issue monthly black-and-white miniseries, will debut in May; each issue will be priced at $2.25.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

DC Enlists In the War of the Gods

For the most part, the relationship between the inhabitants of the DC Universe and the mythological gods who exist within that world has been quite amicable. That's about to change dramatically,however, thanks to some behind-the-scenes machinctions by a manipulative goddess and her rogue followers...

War of the Gods, a four-issue limited series set to begin this July, will be DC's second major multi-crossover project, beginning as ***Armageddon 2001*** moves closer to its climactic revelation of Monarch's heroic identity. War of the Gods will return to the more traditional format for multi-crossover projects of this sort: the main story will develop in each month's miniseries release, while related storylines will be featured in a variety of crossover titles.

War of the Gods' villain is Circe, the beguiling and manipulative goddess who hopes to restore the gods of myth to their position of prominence on Earth. She finally acquires the power and the support to put her plan into action--and only the heroes of Earth stand in her way. As you might expect (this is a comic book, after all), Earth becomes the sit of the ensuing battle--and if the heroes lose, the Earth is doomed to destruction.

War of the Gods is written and co-pencilled by George Perez; ironically, Perez is also pencilling Marvel's major crossover series of '91, ***Infinity Gauntlet*** (although due to deadline problems, artist Paul Ryan will fill in for Perez for half an issue of ***Infinity Gauntlet*** while Perez juggles these two major summer releases). Joining Perez is co-penciller and inker Cindy Martin, who has experience with Perez' mythological storylines, having worked with Perez on ***Wonder Woman.*** Perez will contribute all the covers for the series.

War of the Gods begins on July 11th as Circe's plan gets underway. The main storyline will develop in the four 48-page issues of the miniseries, but it will also cross over into issues of ***Superman: Man of Steel, Flash, Justice League Europe, Hawkworld, The New Titans, Demon, Wonder Woman, LEGION '91, Animal Man, Suicide Squad,*** and ***Dr. Fate.*** Heroes who will play a prominent role in the storyline, in addition to those whose books are listed above, include Captain Marvel (with his mythology-related origin, he's a natural), Batman, Lobo, Fire and Ice, and Aquaman.

War of the Gods #1, a 48-page standard-format comic, will carry a $1.75 pricetag.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

Caliber Hopes Fans Will Become Bounty Hunters

In the past few years, more and more publishers have anticipated the resurgence of the western; various Western projects have been developed, and even Marvel Comics is looking more seriously at Western comics (in addition to their already-scheduled ***Blueberry*** series of graphic albums by Moebius). The Western is undergoing its renaissance right now, though, from various smaller publishers. Kitchen Sink has already gotten rave reviews for ***Owlhoots,*** the turn-of-the-century Western series by Vance and Garcia; now Caliber Press is making another venture into the Western field with ***Bounty,*** a three-issue Western series beginning this summer.

Bounty depicts the life of a bounty hunter William McDermott, who comes to the aid of a woman and her son as they head west to stake a claim in the new land of California. Randall Thayer and Paul Daly are the creators of this lead feature; their series stays away from Western cliches as it explores real characters in an authentic Old West.

The second feature in each issue of ***Bounty*** is ***Navarro,*** the story of an Indian scout who serves in the cavalry until his family is killed by renegade soldiers. Navarro seeks vengeance against those who have destroyed his life--but he has to stay one step ahead of the cavalry, who are in hot pursuit. ***Navarro*** is written by Brent Truax and illustrated by Brandon Peterson and Aubrey Bradford.

Bounty will also feature the bonus "Profile of the Plains," a backup feature that will cover some of the well-known desperados and lawmen of the West. Each issue of Bounty will carry a $2.50 cover price.

by KIM B. PEARSON

Deathshadow Sheds Light on Harlock's Past

Sometimes your past can come back to haunt you in strange ways. In his new limited series, Captain Harlock discovers how true this can be when he finds himself a ship bearing the same name as the first spacecruiser Harlock captained.

Deathshadow Rising, a new Captain Harlock series from Robert W. Gibson and Tim Eldred, puts Harlock in the middle of an Illumidas trap that seems insurmountable. What happens when the Arcadia faces the sinister Deathshadow? You'll be able to find out starting in May, when ***Deathshadow Rising #1*** is scheduled for release.

Fans who missed the first Captain Harlock limited series will find the single-volume ***Captain Harlock Returns*** a handy book indeed. It reprints the original limited series by Robert W. Gibson and Ben Dunn. Of course, if you want the real McCoy, you'll have to have Eternity's ***Captain Harlock Video,*** presenting three animated Harlock episodes starring Leiji Matsumoto's famous hero. Eternity is re-releasing both items at the same time ***Deathshadow Rising #1*** debuts.

by ALEX KIRKLAND

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quickshots

Two--Two--Two Heroes In One!...

The famous confrontation between the Thing and The Hulk in **Fantastic Four** #s 25 and 26 is on almost everyone's list of all-time favorite superhero battles. This November, Marvel is immortalizing that comic book conflict in porcelain when it becomes Marvel's first two-figure limited edition bisque. "This is a high-quality bisque," Marvel's Dave Kozinski said. "Each figure is the size of the individual figures on our earlier bisques."

The Thing Vs. Hulk Bisque, based on a design by Ron Frenz, is limited to 5000 pieces. To guarantee that this bisque is of the best quality, Marvel has enlisted a new manufacturer, Dave Grossman Creations, a supplier to Danbury Mint and Supply who has years of experience producing the Pro-Sports line of baseball bisques, a Norman Rockwell line, as well as the highly prized Wizard of Oz and Gone With the Wind pieces. Grossman uses a high-quality porcelain process for greater detail and quality than seen on any of Marvel's earlier bisques. Because of the time necessary for the production of these bisques, Marvel is asking comic shops to take orders between now and mid-May--so if you want to be sure you get a copy of this rarest of all bisques, reserve one with your local comic shop now (and tell 'em that **CSN** sent you). **The Thing Vs. Hulk Bisque** is priced at $99.95; due to the expense of this item, your store may ask for a deposit to guarantee delivery.

Gregory Pins: The Perfect Complement For Any Straitjacket...

Gregory II is on the way, but it isn't ready quite yet. Gregory fans who can't wait any longer for a new Marc Hempel Gregory release will have something to hold them over this summer, though: Graphitti Designs is offering two **Gregory** cloisonne pins designed by Hempel himself. The first pin features a multi-colored image of Gregory on a gold-plated pin; the second features a multi-colored image of Herman Vermin, everyone's favorite institutional rodent. Each pin is priced at $5.95. At the same time the two pins are released, Graphitti will offer the **Gregory t-shirt**, featuring Gregory on the front and Herman Vermin on the back; the shirt is priced at $15.95 for S-XL and $18.95 for XXL.

TORG Puts the Nippon Players

Have you been dying to fight in the streets of Japan in your **TORG** campaign? Well, die no more! In May **West End Games** is releasing the **Nippon Tech Sourcebook**, the complete guide to gaming in realm 3327 (that's Southeast Asia to you laymen). Now **TORG** gamers will be able to play anything from a deft Samurai to a cunning boardroom executive in the hustle and bustle world of Japan! But wait, there's more! **The Nippon Tech Sourcebook** also provides a martial arts dueling system for **TORG**. So, for only $18.00, **TORG** gamers can get he chance to explore the 128 page world of realm 3327.

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Tales From the Aniverse Plans a Massive Return

Tales From the Aniverse has had a difficult history; after beginning its run from Arrow Comics, the title had to find a new publisher when Arrow went under. The next publisher to offer **Tales From the Aniverse** was Weebee Comics--but they went out of business after releasing two issues almost three years ago. Now, after far too long a hiatus, **Tales From the Aniverse** is back from its third publisher, the new Massive Comics.. Randy Zimmerman, the creator of **Aniverse,** can be sure of close cooperation between himself and the new publishers--because Zimmerman is the publisher of Massive Comics! "Our company settled on producing **Tales From the Aniverse** first, due to its impressive track record, and the recognition it has with a number of faithful fans," Zimmerman said. "Even after being off the shelves for over three years, I'm still getting requests from fans and demands to bring the series out once more. Well, here it comes... All the old cast will be there, but we will be making an effort to concentrate on a small core of characters to begin with. J.B. Space, P'Jonn, and Ms. Chevious and Ganda will be the characters we start with."

Tales From the Aniverse is the first in a projected line of titles from Massive Comics. "We have a five year plan drawn up and already in action," Zimmerman said. "Out next title should be out by the end of the year." **Tales From the Aniverse #1**, a 32-page black-and-white comic scheduled for July release, is priced at $2.25.

Animal Appeal

Animal Man has become one of DC's biggest surprise hits; fans have discovered that the first issues of the series are hard to find--and when they are able to find them, they discover that the books command some pretty hefty prices. In response, DC has decided to collect the first nine issues of **Animal Man** into a single trade paperback, complete with the Brian Bolland covers from the original books. This collection will include the award-winning, offbeat "The Coyote Gospel"--and we guarantee that once you've read this, you'll never be able to think about a Road Runner cartoon quite the same way! These stories are all written by Grant Morrison and are illustrated by Chas Truog, Tom Grummett, and Doug Hazlewood. **Animal Man**, a July 25th release, will be priced at $19.95; it will feature an all-new Brian Bolland front cover.

Marvel Goes For a Personal Best

If you ask a group of fans what's the best stuff Marvel has ever published, you'll probably get an almost-unending debate; everyone has his or her favorite stories that represent the best from Marvel Comics' thirty year span. The same holds true for Marvel's writers and artists as well--the difference, though, is that you'll have a chance to see what the creators think represents the very best work Marvel has ever produced. The Best of Marvel Comics TPB, a summer release, will feature the best stories as selected by Todd McFarlane, Stan Lee, John Byrne, Walt Simonson, J.M. DeMatteis, Jim Lee, Terry Austin, and more. We can't tell you what's in the book--not because we're being coy, but because the contents haven't been finalized yet! Stories nominated for placement in the book include Fantastic Four #5 (a favorite of the CSN staff), Daredevil #7, Amazing Spider-Man #39 and #40, and Thor #337. According to Skip Dietz of Marvel, "This is a project we hope to do every year, and we think...you'll want us to do one every year, too. You'll be able to find out what stories made the final cut in mid-July, when The Best of Marvel Comics, a $12.95 trade paperback, is scheduled for release.

Here Comes the Solar...

CSN has already told readers about the upcoming **Solar, Man of the Atom** series from Valiant Comics, and its multi-part comic-within-a-comic origin story pencilled by Barry Windsor-Smith. Well, here's a sneak peek at some of Windsor-Smith's art for the series--and if this doesn't make you add Solar to your must-have list, then you can't be a comics fan!... Each issue of **Solar, Man of the Atom** will feature 40 pages of story and art for only $1.75--and each issue will feature a two-page segment of what Valiant is billing as "the world's largest comic book panel, the climax of his origin." Look for Solar to debut in June.

Dracula Deals Out Trouble For Card Makers

Everybody wants to get into the trading cards market nowadays--including a manufacturer who thought it would be a great idea to offer Dracula trading cards. What he didn't count on, though, was that Dracula himself might not think it was such a great idea. Readers will have a chance to find out what happens in July, when Apple Comics' **Death Dreams of Dracula #4** is scheduled for release. This special "jam" story features art by Tim Vigil, Mark Wheatley, Sam Kieth, Dave Simons, Brian Thomas, Katherine Mayer, Amanda Conner, Topham Hayes, Dane McCart, and Neil Vokes. Berni Wrightson isn't involved in the jam story, but he does contribute two classics: "Mother Toad" and "Conjure Woman." **Death Dreams of Dracula #4**, with a special wraparound cover by Bruce Patterson, is priced at $2.50.

Death Dreams of Dracula ™ &©1991 Apple Comics

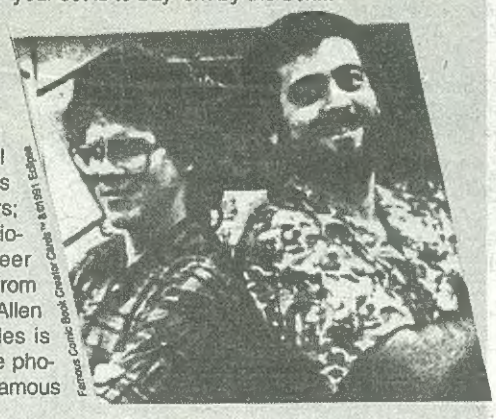
Speaking of Dracula, he seems to attract some pretty popular talent: Dracula in Hell #2, the second part of Apple's origin-of-Dracula series, will feature a cover by Justice League fan favorite Adam Hughes. It, too, is slated for July release.

A Change In Plans

Amazing Heroes #191, which was initially slated to feature an in-depth look at the changes coming to **Excalibur,** has had a shift in contents. According to Fantagraphics, "The creators involved in **Excalibur** have requested that the cover feature be moved back, and we've obliged; as a result, we're waving our magic wands and making this issue into the 10th anniversary special!" The new lead feature for **Amazing Heroes #191** is a spotlight on the "British Invasion," headed by a jam interview with Brian Bolland, John Bolton, and Dave McKean, who also supply a three-way jam cover for the issue. There will also be a special insert modeled after **Spy** magazine that is sure to offer more irreverent chuckles than any 144-page magazine should. **Amazing Heroes #191,** priced at $4.95, is scheduled for June release.

Sign of Success

Eclipse's **Famous Comic Book Creator Cards**, set for May release, will offer a few lucky purchasers a real prize: Eclipse is including 500 special cards autographed by Chuck Dixon and Tom Lyle. These cards will be inserted randomly in the wax packs. Even if you don't get one of the signed cards, you'll enjoy the colorized photos of creators whose works you have enjoyed for years; the flip side of the card will give you biographical data, fun facts, and career statistics, along with an illustration from one of the creator's comics. David Allen supplies the copy, while Ed Rachles is adding color to the black-and-white photos. There are 110 cards in the Famous Comic Book Creators set; of course, the best way of assuring that you complete your set is to buy 'em by the box...


Famous Comic Book Creator Cards ™ &©1991 Eclipse

Byrne Brings Flare Back to She-Hulk

JOHN BYRNE RETURNS TO
THE SENSATIONAL
SHE-HULK
MARVEL COMICS
$1.50 US
31
HEY! NO FAIR!
RENÉE-- YOU SAID I COULD DO ANYTHING ON MY FIRST ISSUE!
PUT YOUR EGO BACK IN ITS BOX, JOHN.
I'M ALREADY LETTING YOU GET AWAY WITH MORE THAN I PROBABLY SHOULD ON THE INSIDE!

The first eight issues of **She-Hulk**, written and illustrated by John Byrne, were some of the most irreverent, sarcastic, and entertaining comics Marvel has produced in many years. When Byrne left the title, the best efforts of a variety of creators simply couldn't capture the feel that made the book a fan-favorite from its inception. Now Marvel has found the perfect creator to recreate that original **She-Hulk** charm: John Byrne, who is returning to the book, determined to pick up pretty much where he left off (and if you doubt that, take a look at the cover...)

Comics in-jokes, trend-breaking plot twists, goofy villains galore--it's all here, beginning with **She-Hulk #31.** What other self-respecting super-heroine would do battle with Spragg the Living Hill?...

Marvel promises that the **She-Hulk** zaniness will not keep her out of the Marvel mainstream; the book will feature a few guest-stars, including Wolverine, Punisher, and Spider-Man, in upcoming issues (but you know that these won't be your ordinary guest-starring roles...). **She-Hulk #31** is slated for July 5th release. John Byrne will write and pencil the series, which is being inked by Keith Williams.

She-Hulk ™ &©1991 Marvel Comics

Let Us Prey...

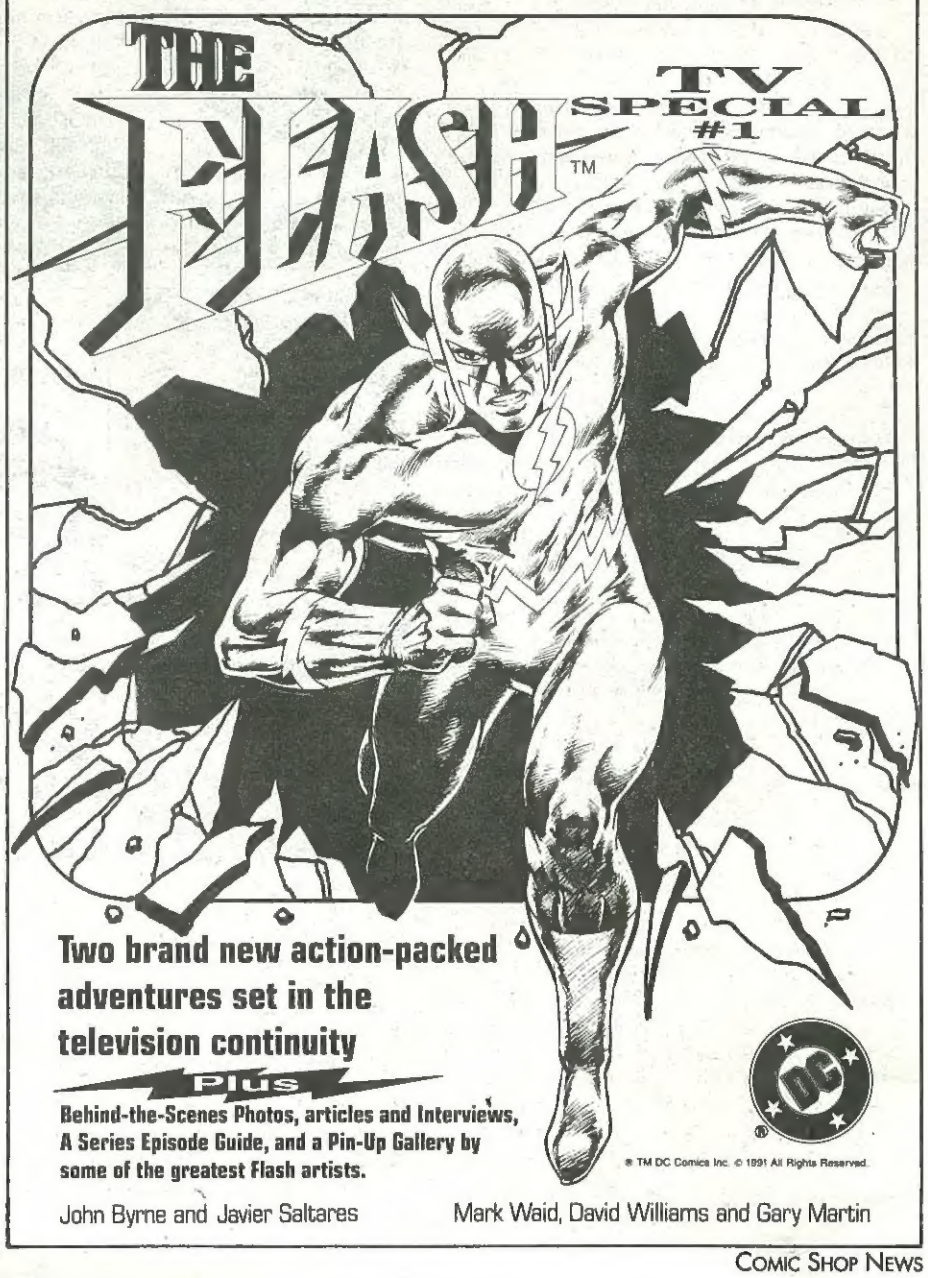
Fredric Brown's story "Arena" pitted a lone human against a single alien in a battle to the finish. Since then, the storyline has inspired a Star Trek episode and a variety of films. Late this year, DC and Dark Horse Comics will offer comics fans a new twist on the familiar theme when **Batman/Predator,** a three-issue new-format limited series, debuts.

Batman/Predator brings the greatest hunter in the universe to Gotham City, where his prey is the greatest man-hunter on Earth the Dark Knight Detective. Batman has certainly faced some challenging foes in his long comics history--but never before has he faced so worthy an adversary whose only goal was Batman's death.

Batman/Predator is written by Dave Gibbons, who wrote last year's World's Finest limited series for DC. The limited series will be illustrated by Andy and Adam Kubert, whose art brought last year's Adam Strange lim-

Predator ™ &©1991 Twentieth Century Fox

CATCH TV'S FASTEST RISING STAR


THE FLASH
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TV SPECIAL #1
Two brand new action-packed adventures set in the television continuity
Plus
Behind-the-Scenes Photos, articles and Interviews, A Series Episode Guide, and a Pin-Up Gallery by some of the greatest Flash artists.
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John Byrne and Javier Saltares
Mark Waid, David Williams and Gary Martin

CSN previews

Give & Take
by Cliff Biggers & Brett Brooks

Each month, Cliff Biggers (in plain type) and *Brett Brooks (in italic type)* take a look at a few choice comics scheduled for release within the next month. Publishers interested in having their books considered for review should send copies to **CSN *Give and Take, 2339 Milstead Circle, Marietta GA 30066***. We'd prefer receiving copies of the books at least thirty days before they're supposed to reach comic shops. Enough business; now let's talk comics.

Patriotic heroes have been a mainstay of the comics industry for almost as long as there has been a comics industry. These heroes have ranged from the all-American, idealistic, altruistic Captain America to the cynical, hard-edged American. The hero who predated them all, though, was the Shield. Later this month, more than a half-century after his creation, the Shield is returning to comics--and I'm pleased to report that his exploits have never been more entertaining.

Impact Comics, the new DC imprint dedicated to presenting the former Archie heroes in their own carefully constructed universe, seems to have put some thought into what comics fans enjoy. The book starts off running and never really slows down; the story's style is reminiscent of Marvel at its late-1960's prime, but with a 1990's outlook. (You'll be seeing that Marvel comparison a great deal, I suspect; Impact has made the comparison a time or two, and the stories are obviously inspired by the Marvel approach that helped them secure a position of prominence in the comics industry some two decades ago.)

The comparison of the ***Legend of the Shield*** *to a Marvel comic is well deserved. The new Impact line seems aimed more at the action-adventure audience than event eh more mainstream DC titles such as* ***Superman****. The* ***Legend of the Shield*** *has all of the earmarks of the classic Marvel titles--a young man who is given a great power and must do something responsible with it--hey, that sounds familiar. And ya know what? It still works.*

Don't think for a minute that ***Legend of the Shield*** is just another golden age character revival; this Shield is an all-new character, and everything any reader will need to know about him is found within this series and the upcoming Impact Who's Who. There won't be any Golden Age flashbacks, because this isn't that Shield. What has been done here is best compared to what DC did with Flash and Green Lantern in the 1950's, or what Marvel did with the Human Torch in 1961: a Golden Age name and concept has been transformed into a contemporary character.

The Shield is Joseph Higgins, a soldier who has been chosen to take part in an army experiment to make him the ultimate super-soldier. Project: Shield is a specially-made suit of body armor that makes its wearer superstrong, extremely swift, and virtually invulnerable. This hero has as much in common with Iron Man as he does with Captain America.

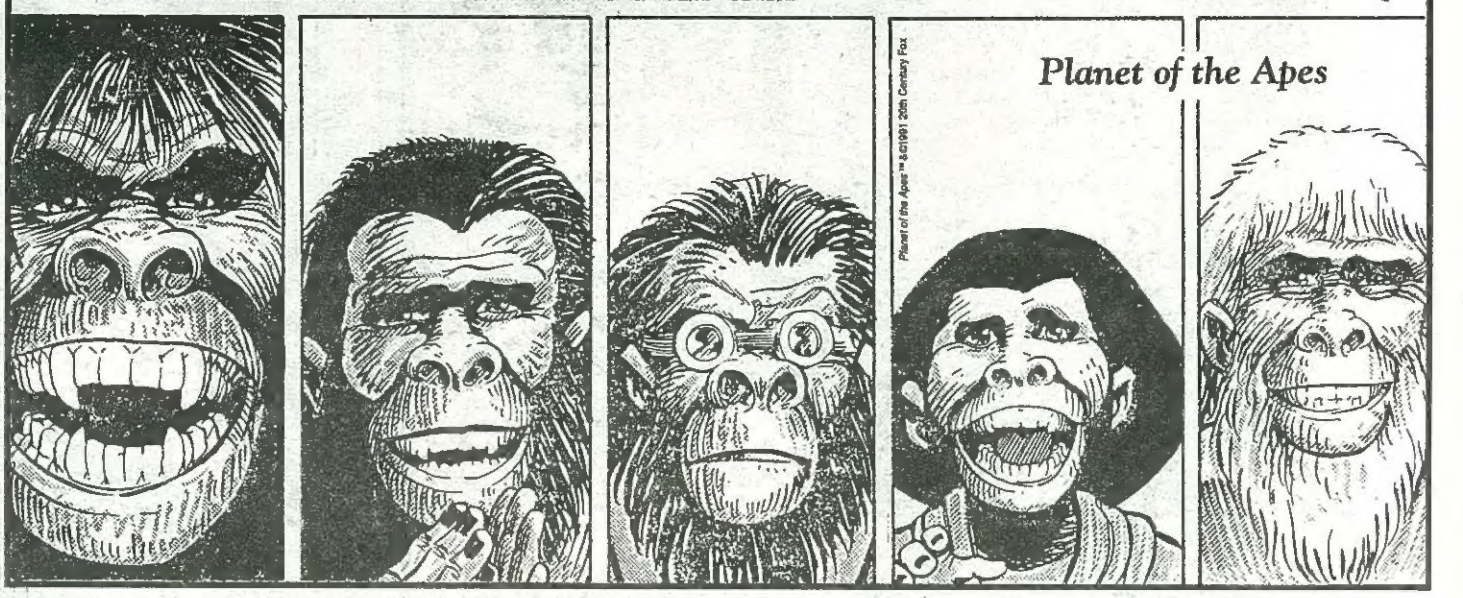
I find the similarities to both Captain America and Iron Man fascinating. It does seem like the Shield is these two characters rolled together, but, as you point out, the Shield is older than either character--so who's imitating who?

Legend of The Shield is co-written and illustrated by Grant Miehm, an artist who first garnered attention with his work on Mark Verheiden's revisionist-patriotic heró The American. His art is bold, vital, and dynamic; the book has a strong sense of action, which is, I'm sure, quite intentional.

Miehm is joined on the writing chores by scripter Mark Waid; the pair have created a book with its share of plot twists. Joe Higgins, the Shield, is unaware that he got his assignment through the machinations of his father, a general; he is equally unaware that his father is willing to sacrifice almost anything--including his own son--to make Project: Shield a success. Miehm and Waid keep the subplots under control, however, so that they don't obscure the origin storyline itself.

Both the art and the story for the ***Legend of the Shield*** *fit together as a strong unit. Miehm's art seems different for this book--almost as though he intentionally altered it to fit the character. The change makes for an interesting effect, and I feel, a very positive one. The sub-plots that you mention had me concerned at first--they seemed to reminiscent of other books, but my fears were quickly waylaid by the rest of the story. They are what we call them--sub-plots. Action occurring in the background. The overall effect of which is to give us much more depth to this comic than we are used to getting.*

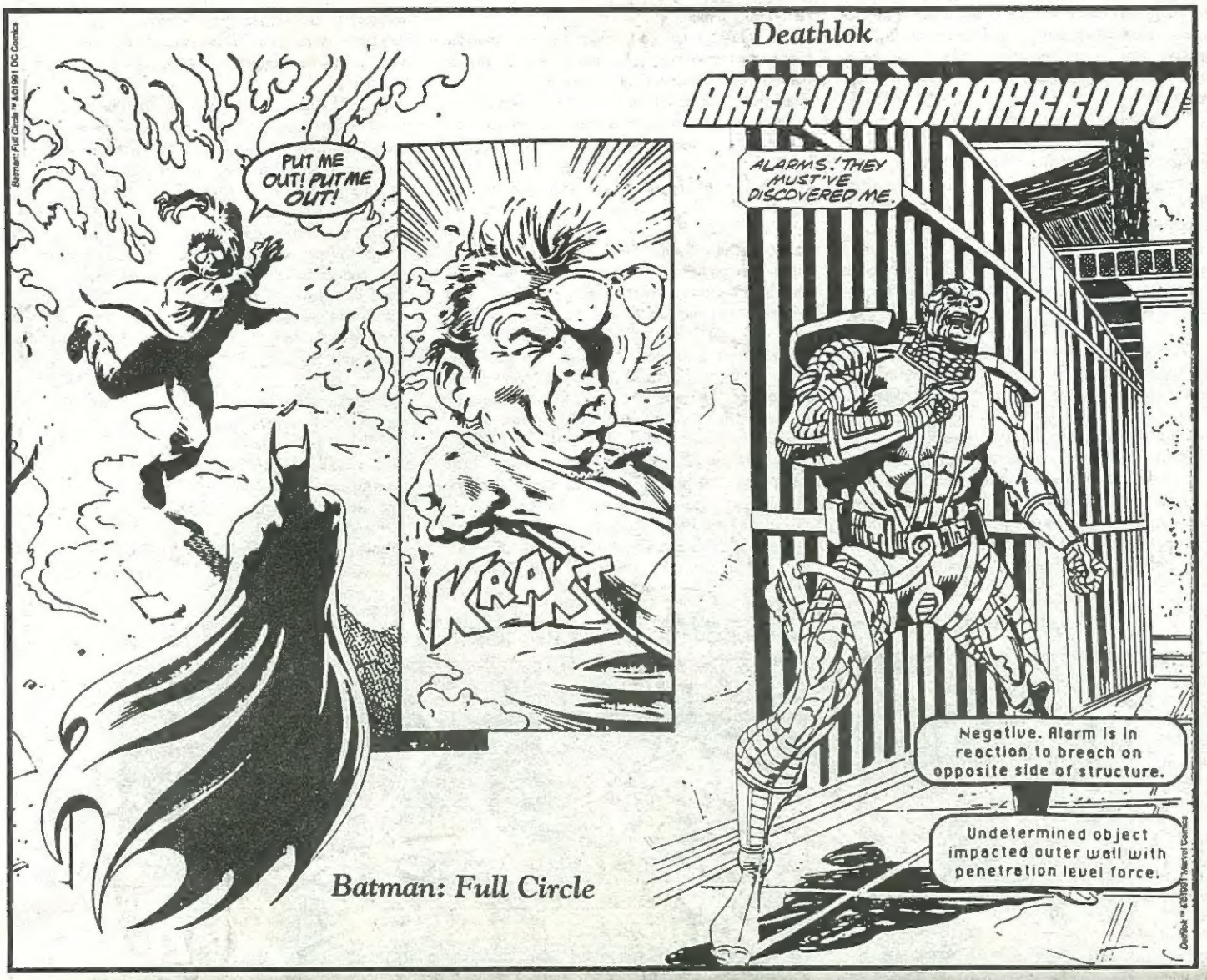
Legend of the Shield is an auspicious beginning for Impact Comics; it's obvious that the people behind this title have put more than a little effort into giving fans a book they're sure to enjoy.



*When I began collecting comics I was seven years old. It was during a time after Lee and Kirby dominated at Marvel. Kirby had just started to produce the fourth world material for DC, and Lee was writing here and there for Marvel, but neither was the industries hottest artist or writer. Newer, younger creators had emerged and were re-creating the way comics were done. Out of all of the books that I read during those early years, one particular title stands out--***Captain Marvel***. There was something about the way that the hero acted, the way that Mar-Vell confronted the cosmic threat to all life that appealed to me. The threat that he had to face was the mad God Thanos, and the creator of those stories was a man named Jim Starlin.*

It's been twenty years, but I still find myself excited. ***The Infinity Gauntlet*** *is Marvel's latest and definitely greatest multi-part mega-crossover series to date. The creative team on this book is writer Jim Starlin and artist George Perez. The tone of the story is decidedly cosmic. Once again, the mad God Thanos is threatening to destroy half of the life in the entire universe in an attempt to appease his true love--Death--only this time around, he's got the power to back it up! Thanos, as readers of the Silver Surfer know, is in possession of the Infinity Gauntlet, a glove that has embedded upon it all six of the infinity gems--previously known as the soul gems, and this gives Thanos ultimate power.*

The story behind ***The Infinity Gauntlet*** *is the kind*


Batman: Full Circle
PUT ME OUT! PUT ME OUT!
KRAK!
Deathlok
ARRRGGGGAARRRGGG
ALARMS! THEY MUST'VE DISCOVERED ME.
Negative. Alarm is in reaction to breach on opposite side of structure.
Undetermined object impacted outer wall with penetration level force.

that has worked well in the past--give a man the ability to destroy the universe, and he probably will--or at least try to. Starlin has always had great success with this type of story. Starlin knows how to create a truly cosmic sense of proportion to his tales, and **The Infinity Gauntlet** *is certainly no exception. The events of the first issue alone are enough to shock many readers, but there are seven parts left! If this series doesn't get the fans of today excited and tense about the coming issues, then the readers of today are dead. This is one of the most exciting series I've read in years.*

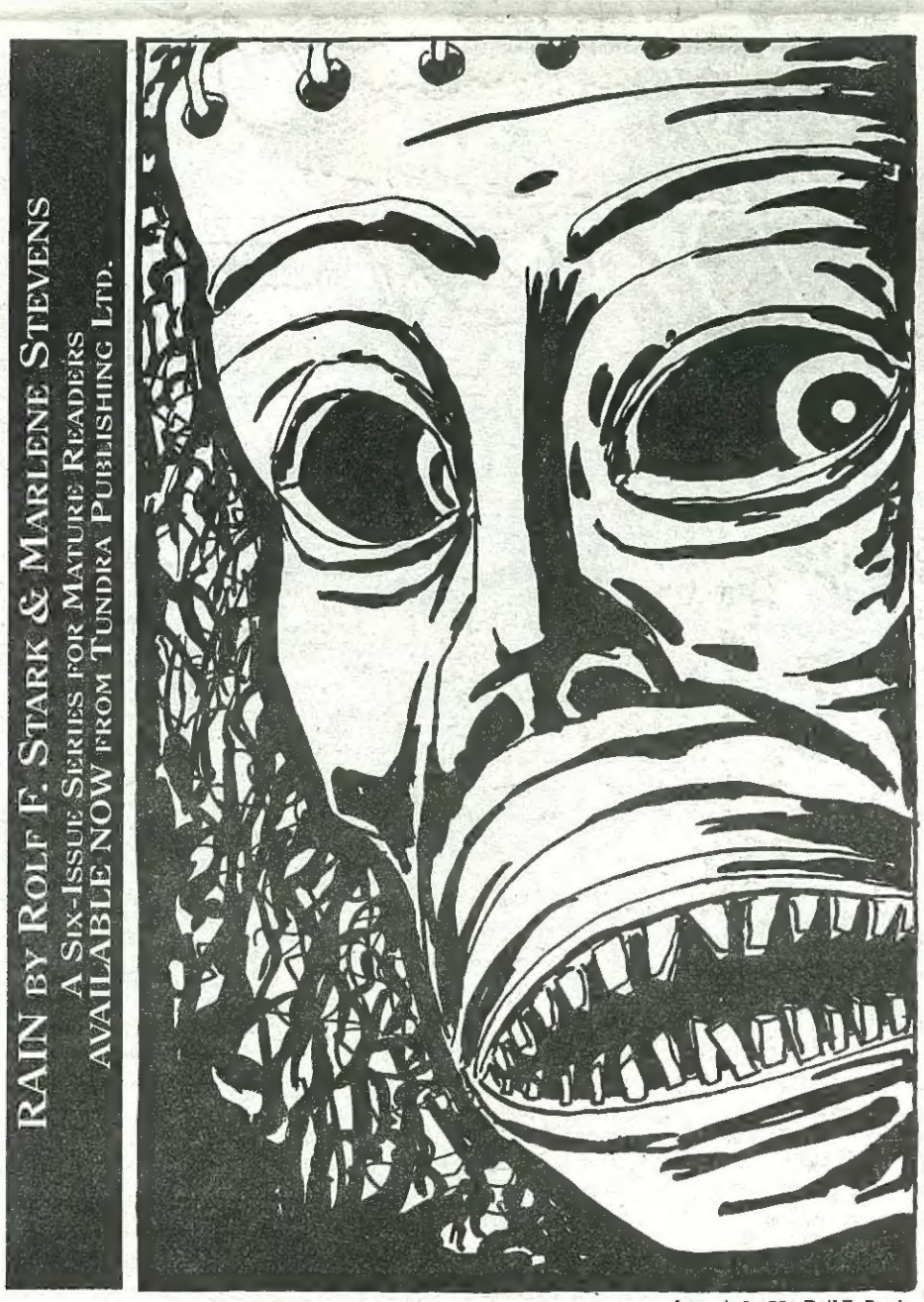
As several mediocre storylines have proven, it's not as easy as it seems to write "cosmic." I had all but decided that I had become jaded to this type of story because of my ennui towards several cosmic attempts I've read recently. I'm glad to see that a well-done cosmic story can still manage to entertain and intrigue me.

The events of **The Infinity Gauntlet** *occur as a direct result of the events in* **Silver Surfer** *and the* **Thanos Quest** *limited series, so pick those up today so that you haven't missed out on any of the story. Also, the events of* **The Infinity Gauntlet** *will spin-off into a brand new* **Warlock** *series by jim Starlin! So, let me reiterate, this one is big! How Big? Let's talk about the art.*

George Perez is no stranger to mega-crossovers, having produced the classic **Crisis on Infinite Earths** *mega-series for DC a few years ago, and his experience helps. Perez's art is the best he's done in years. It has been about ten years since George has drawn anything for Marvel, and that's just too long! Perez has the style of art that seems naturally fit for the Marvel characters. He can portray them (or really just about any character) just the way fans like to see them. One of the best in the industry, without a doubt.*

I think I enjoy George Perez's work here more than I have in years. Joe Rubinstein's inks seem to give Perez's pencils a depth and weight that I haven's seen in his art in far too long. It's as if he has a "Marvel style" that he uses--which may be the case, for all I know. At any rate, the end result is a superlative art job that isn't imitative of any other popular style.

I cannot praise **The Infinity Gauntlet** *highly*



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enough. This is the type of book that secured my interest in comics some twenty years ago, and now, well, it's got me feeling like a kid again. A very anxious and excited kid!

Planet of the Apes #12 is the first issue illustrated by the new art team of M.C. Wyman and Terry Pallot; it's also a wedding issue, which is eventful enough that it should entice both new and former readers into giving the title a try. That's good, because **Planet of the Apes #12** deserves a look; it's one of the best-looking black-and-white comics I've seen this year.

Wyman and Pallot combine a meticulous line style reminiscent of Reed Crandall at his prime with a masterful duotone shading approach that equals anything fans have seen from John Byrne or Eastman and Laird. It's an incredible combination; I've flipped through this book a half-dozen more times as I'm reviewing it, and every time I do, I find myself admiring the book's visual appeal. Not even Marvel's Mike Ploog issues of ***Planet of the Apes*** were this impressive.

What can I say? I enjoy **Planet of the Apes**, *and I think the book just got better.* M.C. *Wyman and Terry Pallot produce some beautiful black and white work. What impressed me the most was their storytelling ability. They know how to lay out a page in such a way to enhance their art--leaving in and taking out just the right amounts. Some of the panels even reminded me of Berni Wrightson's black and white material. It's that good, really.*

The wedding of Alexander and Coure is just as problem-plagued as you might expect a comic book wedding to be, but writer Charles Marshall avoids reverting to cliche and simple gimmickry; his characters each seem motivated in an individual, believable way.

Take a look at ***Planet of the Apes #12***; I suspect you'll be enjoying the work of a creative team that is destined to become much better known in this industry in years to come.

When the conversation of "who's the best Batman artist" crops up, one name continually gets listed among my top picks--Alan Davis. Despite the fact that he only produced a handful of issues, his work is indelibly stamped upon my memory. Heee's Baaaack!

Batman: Full Circle *is a one-shot prestige format book that features the creative team of Mike Barr and Alan Davis--the same dynamic duo that produced those outstanding issues of* **Detective** *a few years ago. What makes* **Batman: Full Circle** *even more appealing is that it's the sequel to the immensely popular* **Batman: Year Two** *storyline.*

The plot is this: the Batman discovers that the Reaper, who he previously believed to be dead, is alive and terrorizing Gotham City once again, which means hardship and heartache for the Dark Knight Detective.

The writing on this book is as crisp and clean as anything that I've come to expect from the talented pen of Mr. Barr. Barr seems to have a real feel for the character of the Batman, and even more-so for the character of Robin. In fact, it was Barr's characterization of Robin that made his stories so appealing to me. For anyone who believes that Robin is an unnecessary or perhaps even hindering character for the Batman, read Barr's interpretation of the team--there really is a strong chemistry at work here.

I've always thought that Barr's writing has been underrated. Comics recently have lavished attention on high-profile writers like Grant Morrison and Alan Moore, but there are a lot of first-string writers out there who aren't the focus of attention simply because they tell a story within the established frames of the genre, rather than breaking those frames. Barr's strong point is characterization and plotting, not surreal twists and revisionism.

Yet as strong as Barr's writing is, it is the incomparable talents of Alan Davis that makes **Batman: Full Circle** *shine. Davis strong use of bold lighting and hard line work takes away any of the "cartoony" aspects that may permeate his work. Davis gives the Batman a dynamic internal strength to match his outward physical prowess.*

How did Alan Davis manage to avoid becoming a target of fan-worship? He has all the dynamism of Todd McFarlane or Jim Lee, with extremely clean line work to complement it. It was great just getting a chance to see him illustrating Batman again; that brief run on ***Detective*** still shines more brightly for me than the Marshall Rogers run.

I just flipped through **Batman: Full Circle** *once again, and let me reassure you, this is quality work! I cherish those issues of* **Detective** *that Barr and Davis created, and can only hope to see them working on this character again--maybe for a* **Legends of the Dark Knight** *stint?...*

Last year's ***Deathlok*** limited series didn't do a great deal for me; it was as if the writers had so many ideas they hoped to include that the plot occasionally got buried beneath them all. I'm pleased to say that the new ***Deathlok*** ongoing series seems to avoid the problems that hindered my enjoyment of the series that inspired it.

Some people at Marvel have described ***Deathlok*** as "**Robocop** done right," and that's a more or less

BATMAN™ by Loebs, Infantino & Nyberg

"MANY PEOPLE COME VISITING HERE AT ARKHAM ASYLUM..."
"NONE COME MORE OFTEN THAN BRUCE WAYNE."
BRUCE, I DON'T WANT YOU TO COME HERE ANYMORE.
WE'RE FRIENDS, HARVEY. NOTHING HAS CHANGED THAT.
I'VE CHANGED. BRUCE, WE'RE FRIENDS... GOOD FRIENDS.
BUT WITH A COIN-FLIP I COULD CHOOSE TO KILL YOU.
DON'T COME BACK.
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG

"POOR TWO-FACE! HE TAKES BEING IN THIS ASYLUM MUCH TOO SERIOUSLY."
"OF COURSE, HE HAS TO STAY HERE. BUT I'M LEAVING. TODAY."
"BUT FIRST, I'M GIVING THE WARDEN A NEW HAT."
SO, YOU'RE JERVIS TETCH?
YES, SIR. BUT THE GUARDS CALL ME THE HATTER.
VERY WELL, HATTER. HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO END UP IN ARKHAM ASYLUM?
BECAUSE I'M A GENIUS.
I CREATED K-FLOPPY COMPUTERS.
BUT MY PARTNERS HATED ME. THEY FRAMED ME, AND HERE I AM!
FASCINATING. OF COURSE I DON'T BELIEVE A WORD OF IT!
OF COURSE. HAVE A HAT?
ARKHAM ASYLUM.
ALL PRISONERS IN HERE HAVE DELUSIONS OF FALSE IMPRISONMENT, HATTER.
BUT NOW YOU BELIEVE ME!
WHY, YES, I DO.
AND YOU WILL SIGN MY RELEASE FORM?
I WILL...
AT LAST! I'M FREE, FREE!
WITH THIS PAPER, I'M FREE. I CAN ESCAPE FROM THIS ASYLUM!
I'LL NEED A NEW IDENTITY, SO MY ENEMIES WON'T SUSPECT ME!
AND AN UTTERLY LOYAL GANG...
AND A HEADQUARTERS ...FORTIFIED... HIDDEN...
WAIT A SECOND ...THIS PLACE IS PERFECT!
I'LL JUST STAY HERE!
YOU SEE, WARDEN, SINCE MY HATS GIVE ME PERFECT MIND CONTROL, I'LL JUST STAY HERE, HIDDEN IN THE ASYLUM!
SOUNDS FINE.
AND MY MASTERY OF COMPUTERS WILL ENABLE ME TO RUN THE PRISON!
LET'S SEE... I'LL NEED AN ELECTRONICS LAB... A WING ALL TO MYSELF... HMM... TOO GREEDY?
NO. SOUNDS FINE...
LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES™

WHAT A DRAG, DUDES...! LOCKED IN A CELL WITHOUT OUR WEAPONS...
DON'T REMIND ME.
AND ALL BECAUSE THE STINKY GRRRUFS THINK WE'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF THE LAST GAEA TREE!
PREPARE YOURSELVES.
I HEAR THEIR KING APPROACHING!

I AM KING GORRRGE...! I HAVE BEEN BRIEFED THAT YOU SIX ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF THE LAST GAEA TREE. ANY LAST WORDS BEFORE SENTENCING BEGINS?
B-B-BUT WE DIDN'T KILL IT... ITS LIGHT JUST WENT OUT..
WE'RE INNOCENT, DOGBREATH.
YES... YOU GRRRUFS KILLED ALL THE GAEA TREES! IT IS YOU GRRRUFS WHO HAVE DOOMED THE WORLD!
HOW DARE YOU BLAME US GRRRUFS FOR DOOMING TRESMUNDO?! YOU... YOU LAZY CAT!
YOU STINKY GRRRUF! IT IS YOU WHO DOOMED US ALL TO A PERPETUAL NIGHT BY CUTTING DOWN ALL THE GAEA TREES! YOU ARE THE ONES WHO SHOULD BE SENTENCED, NOT WE!
YEAH, DOG-DUDE!
I AM KING GORRRGE AND WHAT I SAY IS.
BUT--BUT YOU MANAGED THE FOREST DOWN TO ONE TREE!
THE CATS MERELY LIVED WITHIN THE GAEA FOREST. WE GRRRUFS CAME AND MANAGED IT, MAKING IT OURS.
ONE IS STILL MORE THAN NONE. WHERE ONCE THERE WAS LIGHT NOW THERE IS BUT A THOUSAND POINTS OF BLIGHT. THE NEW DARKNESS SHALL BE YOUR SENTENCE.
I AM KING GORRRGE AND I DEMAND JUSTICE...
...THEREFORE I FIND IT APPROPRIATE TO BLAME AND SENTENCE YOU SIX FOR THE DEATH OF THE LAST GAEA TREE. HOWEVER, I AM A PRACTICAL GRRRUF.
WHAT WITH THE LACK OF TREES AND ALL...!
SO... I SENTENCE YOU TO BE FUEL.
CLARBRAIN-LAWTON BERGER VELLEUER

GREEN TIP™
EVERY DAY IS EARTH DAY
SAVE WATER!
WATER IS A PRECIOUS RESOURCE! SAVING WATER IS SOMETHING ALL OF US CAN DO. YOU CAN HELP SAVE WATER BY SEEKING OUT LEAKS IN YOUR HOME AND HAVING SOMEONE FIX THEM. YOU CAN ALSO USE LESS WATER IF YOU TRY. FOR EXAMPLE -- TAKING A SHOWER USES HALF AS MUCH WATER AS TAKING A BATH; AND RUNNING THE WATER WHILE BRUSHING YOUR TEETH IS A COMPLETE WASTE OF WATER...! CAN YOU THINK OF OTHER WAYS TO SAVE WATER?

apt comparison. Deathlok is a cyborg creation of a corrupt corporation intent on using him--or destroying him--as it benefits them most. The first issue of ***Deathlok,*** written by Dwayne McDuffie and Gregory Wright, supplies the resolution that seemed lacking in the limited series and paves the way for Deathlok to take a much more active role in the Marvel Universe. (And for those of you who think every superhero comic must have a fight scene, there's also a confrontation with the animal-cyborg Warwolf...)

I've heard several complaints about this year's new books from Marvel. Some people, it would seem, are not pleased with some of the new titles because they feature new characters. I think that ***Deathlok*** *will make them happy. Deathlok is a character who has been floating around the Marvel Universe for years, never finding a happy home until last years mini-series. Now he's found his place. I think that* ***Deathlok*** *will also find a great deal of success for Marvel.*

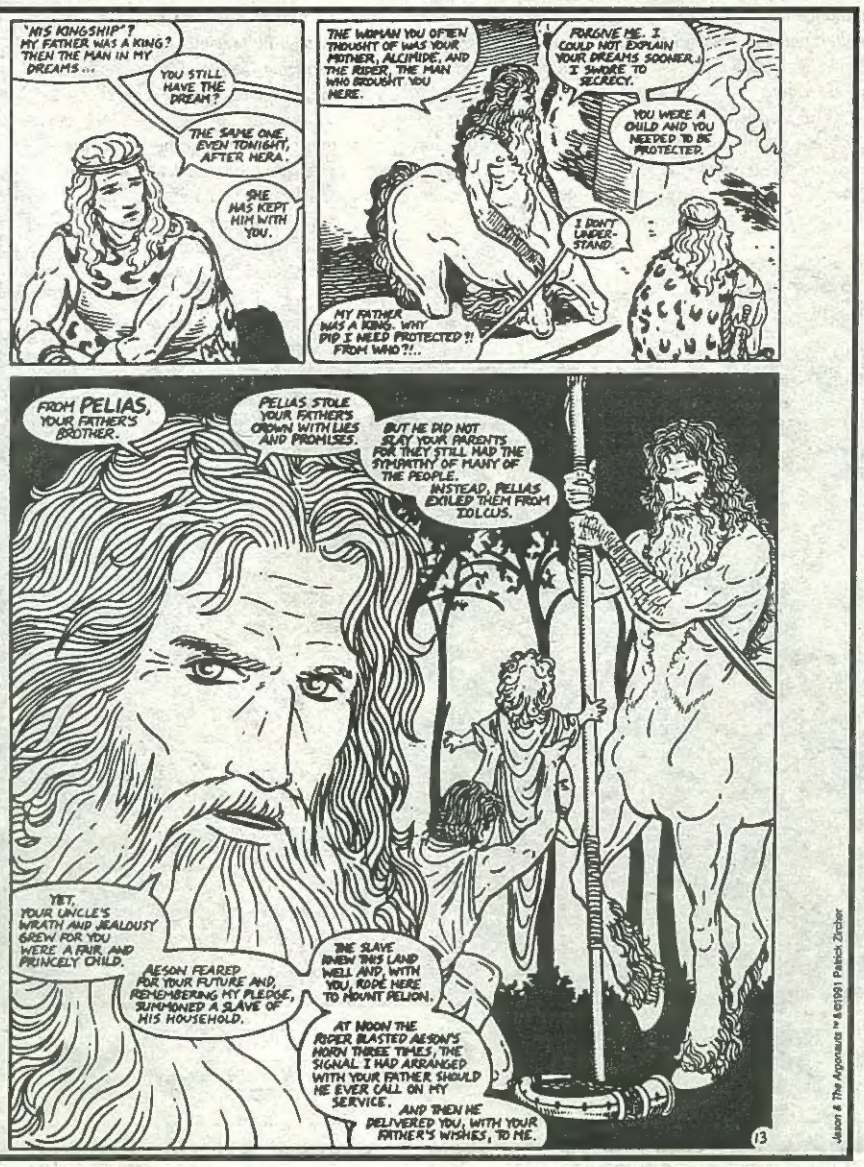
As you point out, the ***Deathlok*** *mini-series almost had too much material crammed in it to be fully enjoyed, now, Wright and McDuffie have room to stretch--flex some creative muscle. The first issue of the new* ***Deathlok*** *ongoing series seems much more natural to read simply because the writers have more time to develop things.*

Denys Cowan's artwork has never looked more Gil Kane-ish than it does here; it's a perfect style for a high-action superhero title like this. Mike Manley's inks seem quite well suited for Cowan's work; in fact, I think I like his inks on Cowan almost as much as Rick Magyar's and Malcolm Jones' work over Cowan's pencils on ***The Question.***

Cowan's art is as impressive as ever, but I do agree with the kudos for Mike Manley. Manley seems to have a feel for Cowan's pencils, and brings out their strengths the way an inker should. All in all, I think the new ***Deathlok*** *is right on line.*

Deathlok has much more appeal in this incarnation than it did in its limited series (which, judging from fan response, had quite an appeal of its own). It's probably Marvel's most entertaining new-hero debut title so far this year.

Jason and the Argonauts


'HIS KINGSHIP'? MY FATHER WAS A KING? THEN THE MAN IN MY DREAMS...
YOU STILL HAVE THE DREAM?
THE SAME ONE, EVEN TONIGHT, AFTER HERA.
SHE HAS KEPT HIM WITH YOU.
THE WOMAN YOU OFTEN THOUGHT OF WAS YOUR MOTHER, ALCIMIDE, AND THE RIDER, THE MAN WHO BROUGHT YOU HERE.
FORGIVE ME. I COULD NOT EXPLAIN YOUR DREAMS SOONER. I SWORE TO SECRECY.
YOU WERE A CHILD AND YOU NEEDED TO BE PROTECTED.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
MY FATHER WAS A KING. WHY DID I NEED PROTECTED?! FROM WHO?!..
FROM PELIAS, YOUR FATHER'S BROTHER.
PELIAS STOLE YOUR FATHER'S CROWN WITH LIES AND PROMISES.
BUT HE DID NOT SLAY YOUR PARENTS FOR THEY STILL HAD THE SYMPATHY OF MANY OF THE PEOPLE. INSTEAD, PELIAS EXILED THEM FROM IOLCUS.
YET, YOUR UNCLE'S WRATH AND JEALOUSY GREW FOR YOU WERE A FAIR, AND PRINCELY CHILD.
AESON FEARED FOR YOUR FUTURE AND, REMEMBERING MY PLEDGE, SUMMONED A SLAVE OF HIS HOUSEHOLD.
THE SLAVE KNEW THIS LAND WELL AND, WITH YOU, RODE HERE TO MOUNT PELION.
AT NOON THE RIDER BLASTED AESON'S HORN THREE TIMES, THE SIGNAL I HAD ARRANGED WITH YOUR FATHER SHOULD HE EVER CALL ON MY SERVICE. AND THEN HE DELIVERED YOU, WITH YOUR FATHER'S WISHES, TO ME.
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Jason & The Argonauts ™ & ©1991 Patrick Zircher

I have always been fascinated with mythology. Likewise, I have always enjoyed the legend of Jason and the Argonauts. I liked the story, I liked the film, and it should be no wonder that I like the comic. Tome Press, a division of Caliber, is releasing the ***Jason and the Argonauts*** *comic by Patrick Zircher, and I'm surprised it hasn't been done earlier.*

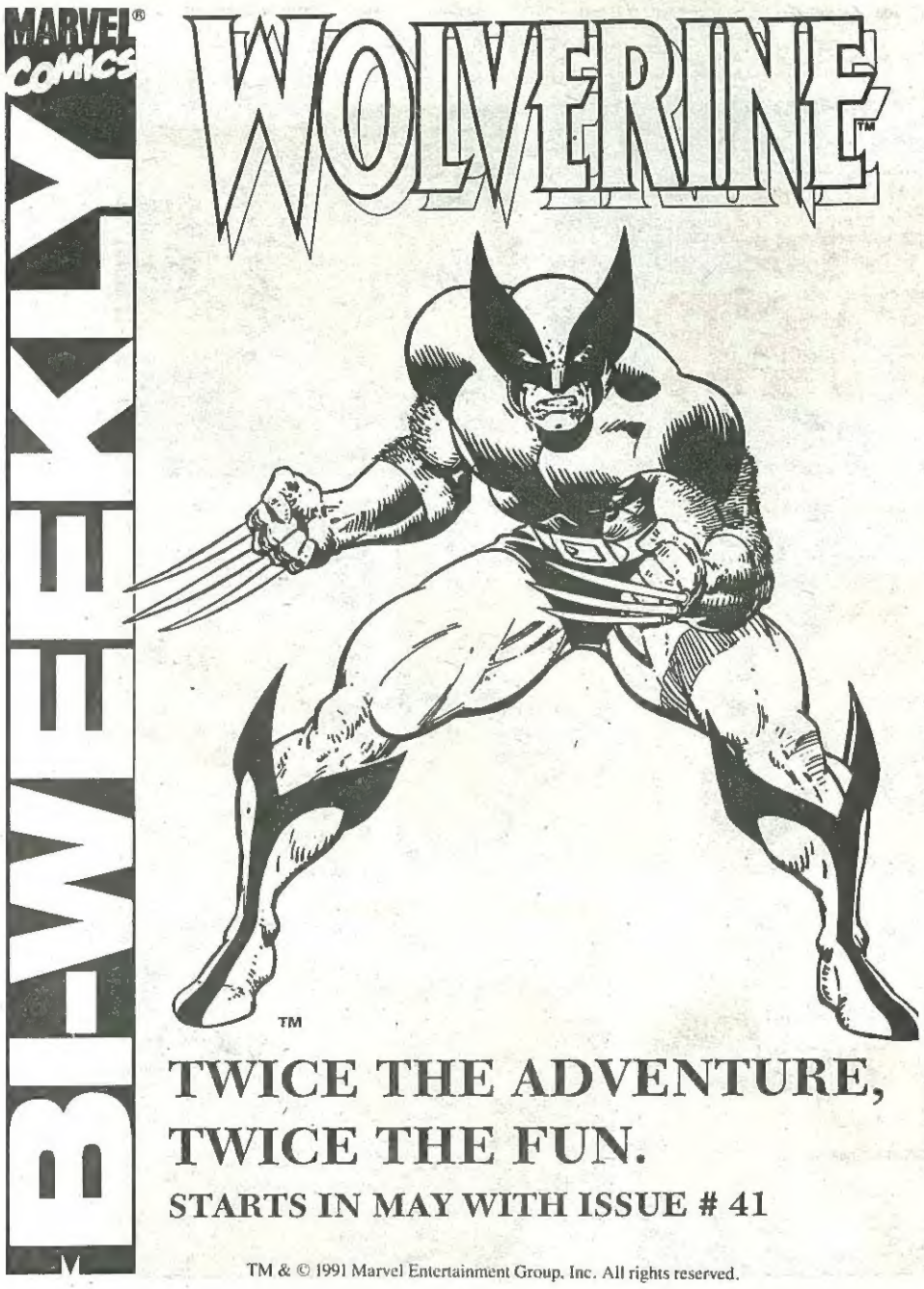
Patrick Zircher takes some liberties with the story of Jason, but they don't hinder the story at all--in fact, in many ways they enhance it greatly. The overall read of the book is quite good, and flows very naturally from page to page--in fact, I was shock that it read so easily. Mythology normally reminds readers of the difficult language and diction of the epic poem, but let me reassure you that ***Jason and the Argonauts*** *reads naturally and smoothly throughout.*

A friend of mine who teaches mythology asked me to recommend some comics with a mythological base, and I found that there wasn't much I could recommend to her. The few comics there are that present Greek, Roman, or Norse mythology either adulterate it severely or include snippets of the mythology in multi-part epics that are hard for new readers to enjoy. I'm glad to see a comic based in classical mythology that can be read by those who don't want to worry about comic-book-continuity and issues-spanning storylines.

Zircher's art is equally impressive. His art style seems reminiscent of both Moebius and Colleen Doran, yet it has a style all its own. I feel that we will be seeing a great deal of work from this young man in the future. He's got real potential.

The comparison with Colleen Doran is very apt here, but I also see a touch of John Byrne in the work from time to time--and for those whose art interests span science fiction and fantasy as well, Zircher's style is akin to what a comic by George Barr and Alicia Austin might look like...

There is a strange connection between comics and mythology--people who like one generally tend to like the other, but for some reason the transition from the one media to the other never satisfies either end of the bargain. ***Jason and the Argonauts*** *helps break down that barrier, and perhaps clears the way for the future of the art of the past.*



HE IS...
the best of his generation
HE IS...
the world's perfect super-hero
HE IS...
the Army's ultimate weapon
HE IS...
a soldier on the run!
THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF...
LEGEND OF THE SHIELD™
WELCOME TO THE NEW ERA OF SUPER-HEROES
AVAILABLE IN JUNE FROM
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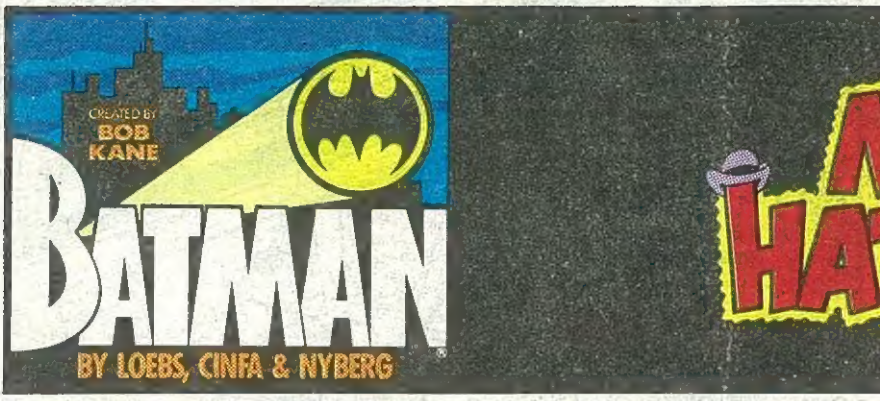
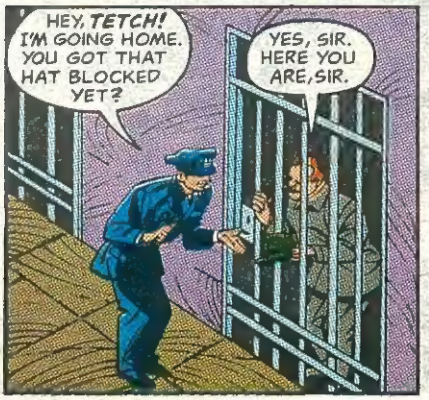
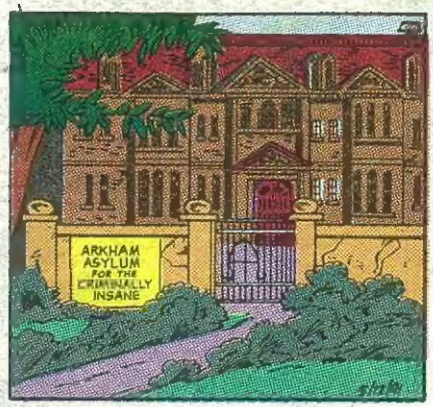

CREATED BY
BOB
KANE
BATMAN
BY LOEBS, CINFA & NYBERG

MY NAME IS JERVIS TETCH. I LIVE IN ARKHAM ASYLUM.

HA HA HA HA HA
IT'S NOT A BAD PLACE TO BE. VERY CHEERFUL, IN FACT.


HEY, TETCH! I'M GOING HOME. YOU GOT THAT HAT BLOCKED YET?
YES, SIR. HERE YOU ARE, SIR.

VERY BECOMING.
YEAH. NOT BAD!



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